

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. - 23. (Cancelled)

24. (Presently Amended) A restraint for placement around a girth of an animal, the restraint including:

a belt having first and second belt ends wherein the length of the belt from the first end to the second end is the same as or greater than the girth of the animal, and an elongate linker, the first belt end having an aperture; and

the elongate linker engaging the second belt end at a first linker end, the linker passing through the aperture to terminate at a stopper at a second linker end;

wherein a pulling force directed away from the girth of the animal applied to the stopper when the restraint is in a first, larger girth position, allows movement of the elongate linker through the aperture throughout a plurality of second, smaller girth positions to a minimum girth position, ~~the minimum girth position being substantially similar to that of the girth of the animal~~ such that there is an absence of a choking of the animal's girth.

25. (Presently Amended) The restraint according to claim 24, wherein the girth of the animal is a neck of ~~an~~ the animal.

26. (Original) The restraint according to claim 24, wherein the movement of the elongate linker through the aperture provides a noise detectable by the animal.

27. (Original) The restraint according to claim 26, wherein the noise assists in the training of the animal.

28. (Original) The restraint according to claim 24, wherein the elongate linker is a chain.

29. (Original) The restraint according to claim 28, wherein the chain is a twist-link chain.

30. (Original) The restraint according to claim 24, wherein the elongate linker is formed from a linker material that optimizes a noise detectable by the animal to achieve an optimal training response in the animal.

31. (Original) The restraint according to claim 30, wherein the linker material is a chain having a gauge that is increased or decreased to optimize the noise detectable by the animal to achieve the optimal training response.

32. (Original) The restraint according to claim 24, wherein the restraint further includes a placement device to facilitate at least one of a location and adjustment of the restraint about the girth of the animal.

33. (Original) The restraint according to claim 32, wherein the placement device is a buckle having a buckle tongue, the belt including one or more holes for receiving the buckle tongue.

34. (Presently Amended) The restraint according to claim 32, further comprising a

belt length-adjustment device, wherein at least one of the belt ends comprises a double sided region, the belt being doubled at the belt end for passing through the belt length-adjustment device, thereby lengthening or shortening the girth of the restraint.

35. (Cancelled)

36. (Cancelled)

37. (Cancelled)

38. (Original) The restraint according to claim 24, wherein the aperture of the restraint is in the form of a ring.

39. (Original) The restraint according to claim 38, wherein the ring is an O-ring.

40. (Cancelled) The restraint according to claim 38, wherein the ring is an D-ring.

41. (Presently Amended) The restraint according to claim 38 further comprising[[,] a second belt-end ring on the second belt end, the second belt-end ring for engaging the first end of the elongate portion of the linker.

42. (Cancelled)

43. (Original) The restraint according to claim 41, wherein the second belt-end ring is an O-ring.

44. (Original) The restraint according to claim 24, wherein the stopper is

substantially annular.

45. (Original) The restraint according to claim 24, wherein the belt is leather.

46. (Cancelled)

47. (Presently Amended) A restraint for placement around a girth of an animal comprising:

a belt having first and second belt ends wherein the length of the belt from the first end to the second end is the same as or greater than the girth of the animal;

a ring attached to each of said first and second belt ends; and

a linker engaging said second belt end ring at a first linker end, passing through said first belt end ring, and terminating at a stopper at a second linker end;

wherein contact between said first and second belt end rings prevents the restraint from choking the animal's girth when a pulling force directed away from the girth of the animal is applied to said stopper.

48. (Presently Amended) A restraint for placement around a girth of an animal comprising:

a belt having first and second belt ends, the first and second ends directly attached to first and second belt rings wherein the length of the belt from the first belt ring to the second belt ring is the same as or greater than the girth of the animal;

a linker engaging the second belt end ring at a first linker end and passing through the first belt end ring; and

a stopper attached to a second linker end, said stopper contacting said first belt end ring in a first, larger girth position; and

wherein said first belt end ring contacting said second belt end ring in a second,

minimum girth position when a pulling force directed away from the girth of the animal is applied to the stopper, the minimum girth position being substantially similar to that of the girth of the animal such that there is an absence of a choking of the animal's girth.